

Milestone Events Making Sprint History: 1899 - 1989

Sprint Nextel: Aiming to be No. 1 in Customer Experience

Two great traditions of bold innovation have come together in a new company with a clear mission: To be No. 1 in providing a simple, instant, enriching and productive customer experience.

The Sprint Tradition .

Sprint's red diamond logo represented the combined achievements of many legendary predecessors, including United Telecommunications, US Sprint and Centel.

Each embraced the same bold approach that Sprint's founder Cleyson Brown showed in 1899, when the Brown Telephone Company successfully went toe-to-toe with the Bell monopoly in Abilene, Kansas. By the mid-1970s, the company's aggressive growth strategies had firmly established it as the nation's largest independent local telephone provider, which is still true today.

When long distance opened to competition in the 1980s, Sprint immediately seized the opportunity. By 1986, Sprint led all U.S. telecom companies by completing the first nationwide, 100% digital, fiber-optic network. At the same time, the company was a pioneer in data communications, establishing the world's third largest commercial packet data network in 1980.

Sprint charged into the 1990s with pacesetting moves for both consumers and businesses. The company that gave America pin-drop clarity also became a global leader in voice and data services. Then a new kind of telecom company emerged in 1993, when Sprint and Centel merged to become a unique provider of local, wireless and long distance services. Sprint took its wireless strategy a big step further in the late '90s by building the only nationwide PCS network in the U.S.

With its relentless drive to continually set new standards of excellence, Sprint has been a game-changing force in creating advanced local capabilities, groundbreaking IP and wireless applications and unprecedented mobility solutions.

The Nextel Tradition .

In 1987, a visionary entrepreneur named Morgan O'Brien founded a company called Fleet Net. Renamed Nextel in 1993, the company rapidly established itself as a nationwide force in the burgeoning world of wireless communications.

In less than year's time, Nextel merged with Dial Call and OneComm, acquired all of Motorola's SMR licenses in the U.S., and received a \$1 billion investment from wireless pioneer Craig McCaw. By mid-1995, Nextel was on point to serve all of the nation's top 50 markets.

Armed with nationwide spectrum and presence, Nextel was ready to dramatically demonstrate its genius for innovation. In September 1996, the company introduced Motorola's breakthrough iDEN technology. This marked the first combination of enhanced digital cellular, two-way radio and text/numeric paging in one phone - the famed Nextel phone. The national rollout of iDEN service began and the Nextel National Network was introduced in January 1997.

From that moment on, Nextel has aggressively expanded its reach and product capabilities. By the year 2000, the company had connected to countries around the world and introduced its always-connected wireless data solution. Soon to follow were its signature Nationwide Direct Connect walkie-talkie service, IP broadband access and a steady stream of feature-rich Internet-ready phones and smart devices.

With unwavering determination to be first, better and different, Nextel has written the book on market-defining innovation, building an intensely loyal customer base and leading the way with compelling offerings for both businesses and consumers.

Sprint Nextel: A legacy of innovation

We've combined two great traditions into a single company with an extraordinary record of achievement. With pride in our bold and entrepreneurial heritage, we'll continue to open new doors for our customers and our industry.

1899

Sprint Founder

Cleyson Brown begins the Brown Telephone Co.

1987

Nextel Founder

Morgan O'Brien launches Fleet Call.

1975

World Class

Sprint - World's first Public Data Network is launched.

1976

Coming of Age

Sprint - Decades of local expansion produce \$1 billion revenue milestone.

1986

Pin-Drop Quality

Sprint - Long-distance service begins and famous pin-drop commercials debut

1987

Industry First

Sprint - First nationwide, 100 percent digital, fiber-optic network is completed.

1989

Across the Sea

Sprint - First transatlantic fiber-optic phone call connects.

1990

Going Global

Sprint - International subsidiary forms to market global public data network services.

1992

Internet Pioneer

Sprint - Makes history as first carrier to offer commercial Internet access.

1993

Triple Play

Sprint - Becomes first major company to provide local, long distance and wireless services.

1994

Radio Spectrum

Nextel - All of Motorola's SMR radio licenses in the U.S. are acquired.

1994

Nationwide Coverage

Nextel - Assets now serve each of the top 50 U.S. markets.

1995

Smart Investor

Nextel - Wireless pioneer Craig McCaw and his family agree to invest \$1.1 billion.

1996

PCS Leader

Sprint - First nationwide 100-percent digital PCS wireless network is completed.

1996

All in One

Nextel - Becomes first to combine digital cellular, two-way radio and text-numeric paging in one phone (using Motorola's iDEN technology).

1997

Revolutionary Rollout

Nextel - iDEN service goes national.

1998

Fast Fiber

Nextel - A 15,000-mile fiber network connects almost every city in the U.S. and Canada.

2000

Worldwide Service

Nextel Worldwide™ service becomes the largest all-digital wireless coverage in the U.S. and more than 70 countries.

2001

Top 100 Markets

Nextel, with Nextel Partners, Inc., serves top 100 U.S. metropolitan statistical areas.

2001

Signature Service

Nextel - Nationwide Direct ConnectSM walkie-talkie service becomes the talk of the industry.

2001

Java Time

Nextel - Becomes the first to introduce a wireless Java™ phone in North America (with Motorola).

2001

Blazing Speed

Sprint - Global IP network features first 10 gigabit per second transatlantic IP backbone.

2002

Ahead of its time

Sprint - PCS Vision launches a new era in wireless.

2002

Nationwide First

Sprint - Becomes the first wireless carrier to complete a nationwide Third Generation (3G) 1X network upgrade.

2002

Sophisticated Device

Nextel Direct Connect walkie-talkie service comes to the BlackBerry for the first time.

2002

In Motion

Nextel - Becomes the first carrier to provide access to live streaming video.

2002

Fast Finder

Nextel - Global Positioning System (GPS)-enabled phone (with Motorola) is an industry first.

2003

Ahead of the Game

Sprint - Becomes the first major U.S. provider to begin conversion of local circuit-switched network to a next-generation packet network.

2003

Cable Telephony

Sprint - Voice phone service in partnership with cable companies is initiated.

2004

Fast Track

Nextel - A 10-year partnership begins with NASCAR, America's No. 1 spectator sport.

2004

Double Coverage

Nextel Wireless BroadbandSM launches and coverage area doubles in less than year.

2004

Fast Data

Sprint - Unveils plans to deploy high-speed EV-DO (Evolution-Data Optimized) technology across the PCS network.

2004

Blockbuster Merger

Sprint Nextel merger is announced.

2005

Done Deal

Sprint Nextel launches operations.

1996 - present

[1996 - present](#)

1899 - 1989

[1899 - 1989](#)

1990 - 1995

[1990 - 1995](#)